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THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

THOMAS W. CHURCHILL

President of the Board of Education

THE imminent and pertinent problem of education to-day, as I see it, is the injection of enough of the living spirit of the time to keep the school alive and adaptable to use. As I read the history of teaching, I note that all its periods of growth and systematization are followed by periods of revolt. Those entrusted with the formulation of education build up systems and perfect them; efficient ways of doing things are selected. Thoroughness demands repetition in the same way over and over. Imperfections loom large in the view of the directors of the system. They concentrate upon these defects until they devise methods of overcoming them. The best discovered settlements of difficulties are then safeguarded by rule and regulation. Mental processes are restricted to uniform standards. Rigidity, inflexibility, doctrinism ensue. Doubt and difference are combated and extinguished by authority. The official brand of education becomes an institution. Its process hardens into habit. The arteries of instruction indurate. They become incrustated. *Sclerosis pedagogicus* results.

Meantime, unsystematized civilization undergoes its inevitable changes and grows farther and farther away from education. The products of the school go out and undertake the work of life. Their lack of fitness for it appals them. Murmurs rise against the school system. Criticism spreads. Time produces at length its masters of analysis and ridicule. The era of educational unrest arrives. Time-honored systems are attacked and defended. Constructive geniuses arise. Changes are forced into the schools from the outside. Ambitious reformers within the ranks develop. They devise their new systems. Education starts upon another cycle.

This is the way in which history repeats itself. Erasmus, Loyola, Comenius, Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, Herbert Spencer, Herbart, Horace Mann, all of the names associated in the memory

of the world with important service in education, have come at periods of widespread discontent, and all of them have attacked an education so formalized and habitual as to seem practically perfect.

Observe the situation to-day. I pick up a volume of the proceedings of the National Education Association and read the opening words of the first paper. They run, "The educational world is in a state of great unrest." I glance at a current number of the *Journal of Education* and read, "Our public schools are being attacked upon all sides." I glance through a daily paper and see a report of an address by a college professor of pedagogy. He says, "Education is sailing through a seething sea."

All the signs of the times indicate that we are repeating one of those historic phases in which the gap between what the world demands and what the schools provide has become so wide as to compel universal attention. Unrest is undeniable. Discontent is undisguisable. What good it to be secured by denying or disguising or by regretting such a condition? It is symptomatic, a sign that something is wrong, a call to intelligent and patriotic men to examine the situation, find the cause of trouble and apply the remedy.

Down through the history of education, whoever pointed out the fact that sclerosis was setting in has always been reproved, rebuked, assailed, denounced as a meddler, an interloper, a patent-medicine man, a demagogue. The outsider who protests that anything is wrong with the machine is assailed as an ignoramus: "You know nothing about education. You must not interfere with so complex and so delicate a thing as this. What right have you to meddle with the eternal verities of the schools?"

In 1898 the educational high priests of the municipality of New York constructed a system. They did not first make any study of New York children or their needs, of the life opportunities open to young men and women. Observation and induction, experiment, comparison of results, selection of the best and extension of them is the method of science. It is the method of building up industry or business. It was not the method of the makers of our educational scheme. In the seclusion of their offices, surrounded with courses of study borrowed from other systems,

guided by internal logic and the assumptions of inner consciousness, they built the curriculum of the people's schools. Selected specialists, trained in the same scholastic traditions, were called upon for contributions. That we might be thought well of elsewhere and abroad, striking and showy exhibits from other systems were installed within the temple where this idol was constructed. Much weighty argument ensued while it was fashioning. But once it was complete, discussion ended. The course of study issued as a sacred perfection from which no jot or tittle should be taken, a thing to cleave to and to worship. Such obeisance would violate no law, for the curriculum was like nothing in the heavens above, the earth beneath, or the waters under the earth. It came forth in all its completeness, full panoplied, and stalked into the classrooms. It came into the school of the immigrant child of Rivington street who hears no English in the thoroughfare or in the home, who on the stroke of the clock that declares him of legal working age, must take his place in the ranks of toilers for a wage. It came into the school of the well-bred child of Washington Heights whose home life is a liberal education, who looks with practical certainty to a career in high school and in college. To the Bowery as well as to Brooklyn came this finely jointed, many storied, richly ornamented course of study, for rich and poor, fast and slow, exceptional and subnormal. For each and all, the same, unchanging, unchangeable. This thing is to pass current for an education. Cut off every day little pieces of it. Pass them out. Send the child home to mull over them. To-morrow see if they are in his head. At intervals we shall send searchers to examine how much has been lost.

Such is, in effect, the traditional management of a school system; the issue of uniform official courses of study over the educational counter; and then examinations!

Coincident with this establishment, the unrest which American school journals perpetually chronicle was well under way in this country. Intelligent parents, distressed by the bewilderment of their own school children, learned by reading the daily papers that the quiet acceptance of whatever a school system thus passed over the counter was out of style. From the very beginning this great course of study met with protest and complaint. Not only

from parents, but from principals and teachers, complaints came thicker and faster. This is what they said:

"The trouble with this is not that it is new. It has too much in it that is old and outworn. Arithmetical processes are here that went out of business practise a generation ago. This course of study, the product of ripe scholarship, has much that has passed into the next stage beyond ripeness."

Year after year the protest of intelligent citizens increased against the teaching of the schools. The knocking at the door of the guardians of this ancient fol-de-rol fell on ears stuffed with the soft cotton of self-complacency. A complainant was a disturber.

Inevitably there grew in the board of education, from the repeated protests of parents, a party representing the spirit of the advancing world outside. Three years ago it reached a majority. Its representations to an unprejudiced legislature resulted in the passage of bills returning to the people's direct representatives, the board of education, the right and duty of requiring schools to render real service to the community in place of perpetuating a performance of pedantry that the people did not want, did not need and could not use.

Within the past two weeks the metropolitan newspapers have given much prominence to criticism of the products of the elaborated and overcrowded course of study of which I spoke. A prominent merchant, an employer of public school graduates, has printed the conclusions of his experience. He says:

Charges are heard on all sides that the public school system is not properly fitting children for careers. This is a subject which I have been in a position to study. The statement is commonly and, I reluctantly admit, justifiably made, that it is almost impossible now to get competent boys and girls, and the natural conclusion is that the public school system is at fault.

I recognize, he says, the vast problems that a system caring for the education of 750,000 children has to solve. I recognize the wonderful work done in changing the groping immigrant into the well-poised American citizen, and everyone who reads the papers knows that, three or four years ago, the board of education itself began to pay attention to such charges as I have mentioned. The struggle between those board members who insisted that the schools should be left in the hands of

educational experts, and those who wanted more direct preparation for life, was a hard one. I am glad to know that the progressive advocates of practical education won a substantial victory over the advocates of abstract bookish instruction. I think it was high time that such an attempt to simplify the school system should have been made.

The writer continues: Many men and women holding responsible positions with me to-day started at the age of thirteen or fourteen, and have developed into men and women of responsibility. They started in some years ago, willing and anxious to work, willing and anxious to learn, and, when viewed in contrast with the child of to-day, we naturally stop and ask ourselves, "Why this difference; why is it that we cannot get children who have a sense of responsibility and ambition to learn and progress?" To-day, children who come to us are sixteen years of age, two or three years the seniors of the average beginner of former years. It may be fair to expect, by reason of their maturer age, a fuller development of the old qualifications. We find the reverse. The graduate cannot write legibly, spell correctly, solve easy problems in arithmetic or handle simple fractions.

This critic goes on to say: I do not believe the teacher is to blame. I do not believe the child is at fault. I consider that the school load is too heavy, so that a thorough training in those few things which are essential, is impossible.

Further, this employer says: In my opinion, there are studies introduced in our public schools which are really a hindrance, rather than a benefit. The time devoted to them should be employed in teaching the pupils the subjects which will be useful to them later in business. Might it not be well to experiment with a school of the old type, side by side with the new, and then, in a little while, with the same type of pupil, find out which turns out the better product?

He concludes: The mistaken idea of the public school at present is to fit the children for the high school, and the high school for the college. Less than five per cent of all the children who enter the public schools ever go through the high schools. What preparation is the school giving to the other ninety-five per cent? It is certainly imperative that we look out for these masses. The taxpayers and business men have a right to demand that the school system make suitable provision for them. It should be remembered that those who can afford to go to college can look out for themselves.¹

¹ Michael Friedsam, President of B. Altman & Co., *New York Sun*, April 18, 1915.

I have quoted this criticism somewhat at length because it is in substance the same complaint that was repeated by newspapers, merchants and parents to members of the board of education with such iteration from ten years ago up to three years ago that the action of the board of education in demanding a simplification of the burdens placed upon the children and upon the teachers seemed imperative. These complaints had independently impressed the municipal government. It had ordered the most extensive and most expensive investigation ever directed at any school system. I do not assume to say that so sweeping a criticism of the results of New York schooling as had culminated in the period I refer to is just. I do not say that it is based upon a scientific and statistical comparison of the products of our schools in 1910 with the products of 1900. I wish there were some indisputable bases for comparison. I do not say that the critics are free from the weakness which makes men prone to exalt the excellences of old times over the deficiencies of the present. But, with all allowances of that kind, granting that our critics are ignorant or prejudiced, I grieve that it is possible for any merchant, any employer of public school graduates, any investigating commission, to say that our schools have not been steadily progressing in fitting children for use in the world. That is what any investigators would have to say of our fire department; that is what would be said of our telephone service; that is what would be said of our municipal bridges; that is said of our school buildings and equipment. To have doubts as to improvement in our teaching and in the results of our education, as to the satisfaction of the public; more than that, to have our teaching condemned by prominent men and by the daily press—these are circumstances to attract the serious attention of every board member and to require diligent search as to the cause.

As I remarked a few moments ago, there was a reason for the parental dissatisfaction with our schools as it was centered upon us in the board of education three years ago. So much was required of the teachers and children that there was no time left for the adaptation of the school to the needs of particular children. Since this most recent comparison of results of the old schooling with results of the courses inaugurated about 1902, I have asked

that a comparison be made of the free time of teachers then and now. The tabulation discloses some singular facts.¹ In the last year of the course of study of 1890 there were 625 minutes a week allowed for optional use. Consider what this means. A teacher finds a class weak in some essential. The most obvious thing to do is to correct the weakness, just as a stage manager, finding a chorus growing stale on some of the numbers of the opera, calls an extra rehearsal and freshens up those numbers; just as an orchestra conductor, finding a part of the concert program weak, puts extra time on rehearsing the weak parts. The teachers and principals of 1890 had in the last year of the elementary school course 625 minutes to put where it was most needed. When we come to 1912 we find that they had 195 minutes, a loss of 430 minutes or 70%. In 1890 the teacher of the last year had seven subjects to teach for which time was actually prescribed: Reading or English, geography, history, arithmetic, drawing, music and writing. There were in that year two additional subjects, *viz.*, bookkeeping and plane geometry, but the time devoted to them was quite within the discretion of the principal and might have been much or little as the exigencies of the school required. There was a separate manual training course as early as 1890, and for pupils who followed it bookkeeping was omitted.

In 1912 the teacher of the last year of the course had nine subjects for which time was actually prescribed: Physiology, reading or English, history, arithmetic, science, drawing, shop-work or cooking, music and some elective, or French or German. Writing, which was in the last year in 1890, had disappeared from the last year in 1912, and geography had become an optional subject.

If you compare other grades of 1890 with the corresponding grades of 1912 you will find a similar loss in the free, adjustable time of the teacher:

	1890	1912	Loss
Seventh year.....	625 minutes	235 minutes	390 minutes
Sixth year.....	625 "	205 "	420 "
Fifth year.....	625 "	210 "	415 "

¹See appendix II, p. 126.

As a matter of fact the loss of free, adjustable time was much greater, for to these figures there should be added some extra time assigned to study periods.

From these figures you will see that the teacher of twenty-five years ago was much more unrestricted in the use of her teaching time than the teacher of 1912. If you go back farther, you will find that up to 1870 there was no time restriction at all upon the individual schools. The subjects to be taught were specified, but the time to be devoted to any subject could be determined wholly by the needs of the moment. A school in a district where the children inherited "addition" with their blood could in those days devote more time to the improvement of English speech. A school in a neighborhood where conversation was grammatically correct could give less time to English and more to what was needed. From 1870 to 1912 the teaching of our schools enjoyed increasing and progressive systematization. It is regrettable that this progress was not paralleled by a set of testimonies from the general public that meantime the children were becoming more and more efficient.

May it not be that with a minimum of machinery, there was a maximum of inspiration, that there was less risk of the teacher's becoming a cog in a wheel and more likelihood of the school's being vitalized by the teacher's personality and enthusiasm, and that there was transmitted something impalpable, imponderable, spiritual, without which education is dross?

The situation reminds me of Cadwallader's filing system. He hired an expert to revise the business of his office. He was so proud of his new filing system that he made it the subject of enthusiastic remark to every friend he met. After some time an old acquaintance met Cadwallader and said: "Well, Cadwallader, how's the new system going?"—"Fine!"—"How does it affect your business?"—"Well, to tell the truth," said Cadwallader, "I've been so busy with the system, I haven't had any time to look after business."

Far be it from me to regard system and organization with unholy disrespect. But far be it from me also to stop both ears to the earnest protest of the hard-headed citizenry who are paying for the schools. Show me that our children are uniform in their

surroundings, their talents and their aptitudes, and there will be no more enthusiastic upholder of uniform expert courses of study than I. But so long as schools profess to serve the community, so long as different districts of the community represented by different schools manifest as they do now distinct and different types of mind, of experience and of need, so long shall I and the unsophisticated layman like me who constitute the board of education wonder why the makers of school systems do not provide and insist upon flexible school programs capable of adaptation to public needs and of satisfying public demand.

It is fair to call attention to the fact that since 1912 substantial changes have been made in the course of study by the present board.¹

Moreover, the time table adopted since 1912 provides for maximum and minimum time limits, thus giving principals more freedom in arranging the time to be devoted to any particular subject.

Furthermore, the minimum amount of time devoted to the essentials has been increased. This arrangement permits teachers to dilate upon the subjects or themes in which the class is deemed to be deficient, and to give less time to such subjects as are thoroughly understood by the pupils, so as to prevent the class from becoming "school-sick." Under these circumstances, the teacher can ground the pupils thoroughly in fundamental studies.²

The board of education, with great labor and delay, has gone far to establish the principle in our schools that a course of study can be made over, that it is not a sacred thing, that education is not the transference of an official commodity, that education is not a holy institution unalterable, framed in glass, but that it is a living service to living children looking around and forward, not backward. The board of education has promoted the belief that star chambers do not excrete wisdom which should be enshrined in unchangeable courses of study. The board of education has established the principle that teachers in contact with children and neighborhoods do of necessity generate ideas. We have

¹ Compare appendix I, p. 118.

² Compare appendix II, p. 126.

devised a receptacle, the teachers' council, for those ideas, and we hope that such a system of inducing, conserving and using such ideas is an indication not of supervisory weakness but of strength. The board of education has realized that a system of education builded in days when every child was getting at home all sorts of work with his hands, and when books were so costly and few that a goodly part of all human knowledge could be absorbed in a classroom, and only there, is not the system of education needed in a city. Here no child can acquire any sort of manual skill at home, but finds books so cheap that there are free libraries at his door large enough to engage him for a lifetime. We have made headway even against our perfect school system in showing that an education based wholly on books, on suitability for introduction into a learned profession, is a moral and economic waste for a people concerned, in so vast a majority, with trade and industry. We are demonstrating that tax-supported schools may not, with fairness and justice, be used for the creation of scholars, but that the right and lawful function is to train citizens able to make their own way and to contribute to the common good. This, if I read aright the periodical literature of the day, is the trend of intelligent American thought and purpose as concerned with the schools. This has been the course of the New York board of education so far as its ability to break through intrenched pedagogical opposition has enabled us to go. With the common schools we have made distinct advance. Every part of the course of study has been modernized. As fast as money could be had, we have put in equipment by which the children have gratified a long-suppressed instinct to make, to create, to build with their hands, and to know the real world about them. To do this with the elementary schools is the easiest part of the problem, because of the touch of the people on this part of the system, obstructed though that touch be by abandonment of power to isolated superintendencies.

The elementary school system was not so difficult of access as the high school system. The common schools sprang up from the needs of children. As the country grew more prosperous, the period of schooling extended upward to children of older years. But the first schools for older children in America were extensions downward from colleges, and were specifically designed to prepare

youths for entrance to the higher institutions. The high schools originated to serve a select, exclusive set of boys, financially and intellectually able to go to college. When this country grew prosperous enough to attempt the free schooling of its older children, say from fourteen to eighteen years of age, there were in existence hundreds of high schools and academies with generations of traditions behind them, emphasizing the contention that their service was for the superior, the choice, the intellectual aristocracy. Into our public school system came this undemocratic idea. For years the high school teacher has had his vision bent upon the college, and has seen the needs of the public service only with a sidelong look. For years we have let high school management pull everybody along a road toward a destination that only a handful ever reach. For years the tail of college preparation has wagged the high school dog. We have built and equipped for our high-school teachers buildings many times as elaborate and expensive as the ordinary schoolhouse. We have paid these teachers higher salaries. With these advantages, with children longer trained and easier to manage than fall to the lot of the lower-paid teachers in the elementary schools, we have let the children be driven out in droves because the subjects offered and the manner of presentation failed to establish a holding power either of interest or of profit commensurate with the opportunity. This thing has gone on in our community until, at the first pinch of municipal poverty, the cry arises, "The high schools are luxuries; cut them off!"

I will confess that to our board of education the high-school problem has put up a formidable and imposing front. The remoteness of high-school studies from the life of the everyday citizen, the solemn air with which its doings are defended by sanction of alleged superior authority has often made some of the ablest members of the board of education hesitate to ask ordinary questions for fear of exposing ignorance of a distinguished and solemn cult. But in this, the progress of the country at large again comes to our assistance, and we find so refined a community as Newton, in blue-blooded Massachusetts, throwing open the sacred doors of the high schools to all children of high school age, whether they be educated or illiterate, clever or stupid, refined or underbred. We,

who read our educational news, find all over the country more and more, cities like Chicago, Los Angeles and Milwaukee declaring, "The high school is not a peculiar institution for the maintenance of its course of study and its traditions for the few who can profit by it. The high school is a public school and part of the public school system. Its business is to serve all the children of fourteen to eighteen years of age. If the old college preparatory course does not attract and benefit these children, let us try course after course until we get those which do the business." This is the growing policy of the country toward its high schools. This is a policy which in New York city a member of the board of education must fight for, almost as hard as the men of 1776 fought to abolish the aristocracy. We do not have to wage this fight against taxpayers and fathers of children. They know well enough that a child of fourteen years of age is not educated and ought to be.

In spite of this, the board of education has done something. It has repudiated the idea that the high schools should be closed to all except the superior, whom the high schools should select by written examinations. The proposition to turn these tax-supported institutions into select schools this board of education promptly and cheerfully rejected by an overwhelming vote. It determined to give its high school teachers the same opportunity of serving the city as is enjoyed by the teachers in the grades who take all comers, the cream and the skimmed milk, and, so far as time and talent permit, prepare then for a living less forlorn.

This board of education has repeatedly rejected recommendations that the new and modern subjects be kept out of our existing high schools and segregated by themselves. We are not disposed to perpetuate scholastic aristocracies by separating the bookish pursuits from the operations of industry. In this, we are also cognizant of the American trend. We see Chicago successfully opposing the separation of its children into hand-workers and head-workers. We see Philadelphia, after long investigation, declaring for composite high schools. We see Los Angeles including in its high-school course any respectable subject that enough children will take to make employment of a teacher profitable.

There is no time to touch upon the other fields into which the healthy unrest of the time has urged this board, but they are

many. You would naturally conclude that the board of education has shown the same disposition to doubt the wisdom and sincerity of every tradition swathed in its venerable cobweb. You are correct. The spirit of skepticism regarding educational formalities is in the air. The country is permeated with it. No New York member of the board of education can escape it, if he reads at all or listens. It is a universal voice, gathering volume as it continues, the protest of a people against continued quackery by practitioners who have their own prescriptions to defend. The public protest is not against education; it is against the pseudo-pedagogy that cannot make intelligible to the common man the things it does as it holds its hand impressively aloft and cries, "These things are not understandable except by minds especially prepared."

This board of education is only an incident in a universal movement delayed somewhat longer than elsewhere because of an old system cleverly constructed more for self-defense than for public service. You cannot stop this piecemeal repair of the schools. You may legislate this board out of office and appoint another. But that cannot stop the process. It will only delay it. The new board, like ours, will endeavor to follow the old course and to assuage public discontent. In due time, as now in our board, the members who do not resign in disgust will catch the national epidemic of desire to rid the schools of their absurd Brahminism. We do not care who is the board of education. The modernization is bound to be done. But there are thousands and thousands who are very much concerned: the children who are in the classes now. The hesitating, vacillating policy inseparable from new boards, and the worse tendency, the desire to make a record by plunging into ill-considered changes—these movements of new boards do not hurt the members much, but they ruin the children's training beyond salvation. For, by the time things settle down to a consistent and profitable progress, these children will have grown away from the age of education and will have lost forever the inestimable benefits of continuous instruction.

APPENDIX I

COURSES OF STUDY REVISED SINCE JANUARY 1, 1914

History

I. The chief points of difference from the old courses are:

1. The absence of English history, and the substitution therefor of "related events in European history."

2. A study of beginnings of American history in Europe.

3. A study of inventions and discoveries that have influenced the development, industries and social life of mankind, with special reference to the progress of our country. The latter is a particularly important innovation, because it gives credit to industries, discoveries and inventions as the real factors in civilization.

4. Greater emphasis on current events.

II. Special Features of the Course:

1. According to the new course the general aim in teaching history in the elementary schools should be:

- (a) To give the pupil a clear idea of the principal occurrences in the development of our nation.

- (b) To give an understanding of the institutions of our country and their origin.

- (c) To engender in the pupil a recognition of and a feeling for what is good and great and to awaken in him a sympathy with all praiseworthy human endeavor.

- (d) To induce right conduct through imitation of illustrious examples.

- (e) To foster a love of country.

2. History in the first four years

In the first four years the subject is taught in the language and geography work through story-telling and supplementary reading that have a historical bearing. The topics are considered chiefly in connection with holidays and celebrations, the teacher aiming to make clear the reason for the observance of the day. In the fourth year local history is taught through historical landmarks.

3. History in the fifth and sixth years

The first cycle of American history is completed in the sixth year. The fundamental aim during this cycle is not to store the child's mind with detailed facts, but to paint vivid pictures so as to give the pupil lasting impressions that will serve as a background for more intensive reading and historical study. The child is fond of the dramatic and of thrilling adventure; and the material outlined for the work of this year, selected stories of great men and events, is especially adapted to appeal to these impulses.

4. History in the seventh and eighth years

A second cycle of American history is completed in the seventh and eighth years. The material selected for emphasis includes government policies, business, industrial and social conditions, trade relations and institutions of the present which show most clearly our debt to the past and give to the pupil the best idea of progress rather than such facts as have only a temporary or antiquarian interest.

Under this heading there has been incorporated in the course a study of inventions and discoveries which have influenced development and progress, especially in this country.

To sum up—revision of the course of study in history has aimed at simplification:

(a) Through the elimination of English history and European not directly related to American history.

(b) Through the elimination of topics in American history beyond the limit of the child's mental powers.

(c) Through a simpler treatment in the lower grades (up to seventh year), in which the emotional element is predominant.

Revision has also aimed to relate the subject more closely to present-day life:

(a) By treating the events of the past as explanations of our present-day life and institutions.

(b) By emphasizing in each grade where possible current events.

Arithmetic

The new course in arithmetic is an outgrowth of the tentative course adopted for a year's trial. Tentatively adopted, it was with certain modifications finally approved.

Special Features:

1. Certain grades are made responsible for certain special work which under the "spiral method" of the preceding course was spread over one or two grades.
2. The work in inventional geometry has been eliminated.
3. The work in algebra is limited to the use of the equation and this is made optional.
4. Rules in arithmetic that have in practise become obsolete have been omitted.
5. Emphasis is placed, more largely than in previous courses, upon accuracy and rapidity in the fundamental rules.

The course as a whole now aims to teach arithmetic in the elementary school so as to develop a pupil's interest and intelligence in mathematical problems drawn fresh from life, and "to give the pupil the ability to solve problems of an every-day type easily, accurately, economically and with a clear understanding of the processes employed."

The syllabus of the course emphasizes the practical value of arithmetic, omitting to a large extent topics whose relation to life is not very close. It also emphasizes the need for using the local environment and the experience of the children as sources for problems. It now prescribes the application of processes actually used in the business world in the solution of problems. The new business and social situations that arise are to be made clear before the solution of the problem involving them is required.

The course is simpler because of the matter eliminated or omitted, and because of the treatment advocated. It is more practical because of its aim and the effort made to keep the work in close touch with the realities of life's situations.

*Civics*¹

The new course and syllabus aim at the realization on the part of the teachers and pupils that the practise of civic virtue in a

¹ Adopted May 27, 1914.

community is more important than a knowledge of governmental forms.

“While a pupil should be taught that a citizen’s rights are the most important things that he can possess, that the government exists for the protection of his rights, yet he should be constantly and persistently reminded that every right has a corresponding duty.”

The course dwells constantly on duties and responsibilities toward the community. Economy is emphasized by calling attention to the cost of civic improvements and to the ultimate defrayer of the expenses, *viz.*, the rent payer and the individual citizen. The constant refrain is “rights and responsibilities.”

Details

The course in civics readily divides itself into three units:

1. The work of the first four years is mainly directed to safety and caution, to the family, the school and the neighborhood.

2. Specific civic instruction begins in the fifth year bearing directly upon the local affairs of the city and in the sixth year upon state and national affairs. The close of the sixth year completes the first cycle of simple study so that a pupil who leaves school then may have an understanding, however elementary, of the forms and procedure of government and of his duties.

3. The second cycle of instruction in the seventh and eighth years is more formal. The aim in these years is not so much the machinery of government as the functions of the various parts. Throughout the last two years use is made of current events which illustrate the actual practise of government. The nomination of candidates, the party campaigns, the elections, court preceedings, acts of Congress or of the legislature, the actions of the President of the United States, of the governor of the state, of the mayor of the city, as well as significant events in the civic life of the nation, state and city, should be used to vitalize interest and to promote clearness of ideas.

To sum up, the new course has outlined work in civics which is

simpler than formerly, less theoretical and more closely related to life.

Ethics

The teaching of ethics is included in the course of study for civics. This is to be accomplished not so much by actual teaching, or precept, as by example of the teachers, and by participation by the pupil in the conduct of the school.

The syllabus recommends that in order that pupils may have actual experience in governing themselves they should be released from constant guardianship. They should be given some responsibility and some opportunity for self-government by allowing them to manage or take an active part in managing the discipline of the school, the recitation, their own clubs, games, playgrounds, fire drills, opening exercises, entertainments, class and school libraries, and athletic contests.

The pupils are to be made responsible for something in the preservation of school property, in the tidiness of school premises and schoolrooms and of the streets of the neighborhood, and thereby they are to learn that mutual assistance and co-operative service are the fundamental principles of all healthy self-government.

*Music*¹

In music the course of study has been simplified without loss of effectiveness. The purpose of the new syllabus is to train children to sing and to develop an appreciation of good music.

The teaching of technicalities is reduced to a minimum, especially in the primary grades. More dependence is placed upon rote methods and rote singing in primary grades. Two-part singing, which formerly began in the second year, is deferred to the fifth year. Music writing is dispensed with in primary grades. Much emphasis is placed upon voice training, song interpretation and intelligent use of enunciation of English in singing.

To sum up, the revision has been simplification from the theoretical and technical toward the practical.

¹ Adopted May 7, 1914.

*Penmanship*¹

A pamphlet of instructions regarding the muscular movement system of penmanship was issued, similar in effect to a course of study. The aim was to insure in the schools a uniform system of penmanship. The pamphlet contains uniform letter types and a few exercises in muscular movement, together with general instructions as to posture while writing, holding the pen, *etc.* The types of letter chosen are those that seem simplest for general use.

*Physical Training*²

The new syllabus is much simpler than the old. Many complicated exercises peculiar to formal gymnastics have been eliminated and the actual number of exercises has been greatly reduced. Efficiency of exercise is now sought rather than variety.

Rhythmic exercises have been introduced. These provide vigorous rapid movements which are used for hygienic purposes.

The most radical departure from traditional practise has been made in the exercises designed for good posture. The underlying fault in bad posture was a downward displacement of the head, chest and abdominal organs, associated with a corresponding deficiency in the blood distribution. To correct these defects, "elevation exercises" were devised. These lift the head, chest and abdominal organs, and by increasing the capacity of the chest affect the distribution of the blood.

The co-operation of the pupils is enlisted in obtaining the habit of good posture.

The new syllabus groups the exercises according to their purpose. This enables the teacher and pupils to understand the nature and intent of the exercises and stimulates effort.

The purposes of physical training are:

- (1) To obtain good posture.
- (2) To make pupils alert, accurate and graceful in movements.
- (3) To render them vigorous and able to endure.
- (4) To teach them forms of recreation for use in after life.
- (5) To establish the laws of health for the immediate purpose of establishing a life-long habit of good hygiene.

To obtain these results the lesson is divided into sections;

¹ Adopted October, 1914.

² Adopted June, 1914.

- (1) Corrective exercises for good posture.
- (2) Educational exercises for alertness and accuracy.
- (3) Hygienic exercises for vigor and endurance.
- (4) Recreative exercises for instruction in play and enjoyment in its practise.

Homemaking Course

A homemaking course for girls of the elementary schools was prepared including the following subjects: Cooking, laundry work, sewing, arithmetic, hygiene, first aid, physical exercises, English, music, and chemistry.

The course aims to arouse an interest in home keeping, by imparting knowledge of important theoretical and practical questions arising in home-keeping and by instilling habits of industry, order, cleanliness and thrift.

The means employed is a furnished flat consisting of living-room, bedroom, dining-room, kitchen and bathroom.

This is considered one of the pre-vocational courses for girls, on the ground that most women will sooner or later be engaged in homemaking, and therefore it becomes the most important vocational training that can possibly be given to girls.

Shopwork

Wherever possible, shopwork has been extended to all pupils thirteen years of age or over who are below the seventh year.

Cooking

The same has been done in the teaching of cooking.

Differentiated Courses in Seventh and Eighth Years

Differentiated courses in the seventh and eighth years have been established.

For Public School 62 six courses have been recommended, as follows:

<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>
1. Academic	1. Academic
2. Commercial	2. Commercial
3. Industrial	3. Industrial
(a) Woodwork	(a) Dressmaking
(b) Machine shop	(b) Millinery
(c) Electric wiring	(c) Pasting and novelty
(d) Sheet metal	(d) Power machines

At the beginning of the 7A grade the pupils will be divided into six sections, each section in turn taking up either the academic course or the commercial course, or one of four industrial courses, devoting in this case nine weeks to each course. These courses are intended to give to the boy merely an insight into the different vocations, in order to disclose to him his bent, if he has any. At the close of the 8A grade his series of experimental courses will have been completed.

Commercial Course

A differentiated course for children intending to enter business has been established. The object of this commercial course is to give the pupils an understanding of the simpler business transactions, and ability to perform the routine work incidental to the conducting of commercial affairs. The pupils are to get an idea of the correct performance of the ordinary tasks that will be required of them, and a knowledge of how business transactions are recorded, so that they may not be obliged to obtain empirically all their knowledge of business. It is not proposed to turn out stenographers, typewriters or bookkeepers, but it is proposed to give pupils taking this course a good foundation, and then to advise them to continue to practise in the evening schools, so as to be ready to accept more responsible positions when their age will warrant an offer.

APPENDIX II—COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF TIME DISTRIBUTION IN THE COURSES OF STUDY (IN MINUTES PER WEEK)

Subject	FIRST YEAR					SECOND YEAR				
	1860	1870	1880	Reg. 1890	Man. Tr. 1890	1900	1912	1915	1900	1912
Opening Exercises.....	*	*	150	75	75	75	75	75	75	75
{ Physical Training.....	...	...	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
{ Recreases.....	...	...	90	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
{ Physiology and Hygiene.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Language or English.....	*	*	480	360	330	360	450	570	360	510
{ Oral Lessons on Natural Philosophy, Science, Astronomy, etc..	*	*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
{ Object Lessons.....	...	*	120	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
{ Science.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
{ Nature Study.....	...	*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Geography.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
History.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Arithmetic.....	*	*	360	240	210	180	125	90	240	150
Algebra.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Plane Geometry.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Bookkeeping.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Electives.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Drawing.....	...	*	60	30	90	180	120	90	60	120
Constructive Work.....	...	...	...	...	...	180	30	30	60	30
Sewing.....	...	...	Opt.	...	...	...	...	...	Opt.	...
Shopwork.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cooking.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Music.....	*	*	60	25	*	60	60	40	25	60
Penmanship.....	...	*	120	120	90	90	100	75	120	125
Manners and Morals. Ethics.....	...	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Study and Unassigned Time.....	^a 1500	1500	60	550	605	455	0	^b 170	550	175
Totals.....	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500

* Subjects taught but with no time prescribed. † Subjects taught but included in the time of some other subjects. Opt. Optional—not counted. Subjects bracketed count only as having one period of the time specified. ^a In 1860 it was provided that 120 minutes per day be devoted to study and preparation. ^b In 1915 one study period is required each day. ^c In schools having facilities (1890 and 1900). ^d Not counted in totals—applies only to one sex. ^e Not counted in totals. If electives were not chosen the principal distributed the time according to his discretion. In 1915 such time if electives were not chosen must be devoted to English and geography. Therefore time assigned to electives in 1915 is counted. ^f Not provided for in main table as given in official circular. Prescribed, however, in footnote.

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF TIME DISTRIBUTION (Continued)

No. 3]

EDUCATION

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Subject	THIRD YEAR						FOURTH YEAR						
	1860	1870	1880	Man. Tr.		1915	1860	1870	1880	Man. Tr.		1912	1915
				Reg. 1890	1890					Reg. 1890	1890		
Opening Exercises.....	•	•	120	75	75	75	•	•	140	75	75	75	75
{ Physical Training.....	•	•	•	•	•	{ 180	•	•	•	•	•	{ 150	{ 150
{ Recreases.....	•	•	60	75	75		•	•	•	•	•		
{ Physiology and Hygiene.....	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Language or English.....	•	•	480	360	330	420	•	•	500	300	270	390	600
{ Oral Lessons on Natural Philosophy, Science, Astronomy, etc.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	80	•	•	•	•
{ Object Lessons.....	•	•	90	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Science.....	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
{ Nature Study.....	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Geography.....	•	•	60	30	•	†	•	•	120	60	45	60	60
History.....	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	40	•	60	†
Arithmetic.....	•	•	390	240	210	180	•	•	300	180	180	150	150
Algebra.....	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Plane Geometry.....	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Bookkeeping.....	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Electives.....	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Drawing.....	•	•	60	30	90	180	•	•	90	40	90	180	90
Constructive Work.....	•	•	•	•	60	180	•	•	•	•	•	180	{ 60
Sewing.....	•	•	Opt.	60	60	†	•	•	Opt.	•	60	Opt.	{ 60
Shopwork.....	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Cooking.....	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Music.....	•	•	60	25	•	60	•	•	90	60	50	60	40
Penmanship.....	•	•	120	120	120	90	•	•	120	120	120	†	75
Manners and Morals. Ethics.....	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Study and Unassigned Time.....	^a 1500	1500	60	545	540	395	^b 205	80	60	625	670	415	^b 210
Totals.....	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500

* Subjects taught but with no time prescribed. † Subjects taught but included in the time of some other subjects. Opt. Optional—not counted. Subjects bracketed count only as having one period of the time specified. ^a In 1860 it was provided that 120 minutes per day be devoted to study and preparation. ^b In 1915 one study period is required each day. ^c In schools having facilities (1890 and 1900). ^d Not counted in totals—applies only to one sex. ^e Not counted in totals. If electives were not chosen the principal distributed the time according to his discretion. ^f In 1915 such time if electives were not chosen must be devoted to English and geography. Therefore time assigned to electives in 1915 is counted. ^g Not provided for in main table as given in official circular. Prescribed, however, in footnote.

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF TIME DISTRIBUTION (Continued)

Subject	FIFTH YEAR					SIXTH YEAR				
	1880	1870	1880	Reg. 1890	Man. Tr. 1890	1900	1912	1915	1900	1912
	1860	1870	1880	Reg. 1890	Man. Tr. 1890	1880	1870	1880	Reg. 1890	Man. Tr. 1890
Opening Exercises.....	•	•	140	75	75	75	•	140	75	75
{ Physical Training.....	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
{ Recesses.....	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
{ Physiology and Hygiene.....	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Language or English.....	•	•	500	300	270	390	•	480	300	270
{ Oral Lessons on Natural Philosophy, Science, Astronomy, etc..	•	•	80	•	•	•	•	80	•	•
{ Object Lessons.....	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
{ Science.....	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
{ Nature Study.....	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Geography.....	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
History.....	•	•	120	60	60	60	•	120	60	60
Arithmetic.....	•	•	•	40	60	60	•	80	40	60
Algebra.....	•	•	300	180	150	180	•	160	180	150
Plane Geometry.....	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Opt. 120	•	•
Bookkeeping.....	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Electives.....	•	•	•	100	•	•	•	•	•	•
Drawing.....	•	•	90	40	90	180	•	50	40	120
Constructive Work.....	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Sewing.....	•	•	Opt.	•	•	Opt.	Opt.	Opt.	•	•
Shopwork.....	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Cooking.....	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Music.....	•	•	•	60	50	60	•	90	60	50
Penmanship.....	•	•	•	120	120	•	•	120	120	•
Manners and Morals. Ethics.....	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Study and Unassigned Time.....	a 1500	1500	60	625	595	415	a 1500	60	625	595
Totals.....	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500

* Subjects taught but with no time prescribed. † Subjects taught but included in the time of some other subjects. Opt. Optional—not counted. Subjects bracketed count only as having one period of the time specified. a In 1860 it was provided that 120 minutes per day be devoted to study and preparation. b In 1915 one study period is required each day. c In schools having facilities (1890 and 1900). d Not counted in totals—applies only to one sex. e Not counted in totals. If electives were not chosen the principal distributed the time according to his discretion. In 1915 such time if electives were not chosen must be devoted to English and geography. Therefore time assigned to electives in 1915 is counted. Not provided for in main table as given in official circular. Prescribed, however, in footnote.

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF TIME DISTRIBUTION (Continued)

Subject	SEVENTH YEAR							EIGHTH YEAR							
	1860	1870	1880	Reg. 1890	Man. Tr. 1890	1900	1912	1915	1860	1870	1880	1890	1900	1912	1915
Opening Exercises.....	*	*	140	75	75	75	75	75	...	...	...	...	...	75	75
{ Physical Training.....	...	...	*	*	*	50	90	80	...	...	...	...	...	90	80
{ Recreases.....	...	...	...	...	...	†	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
{ Physiology and Hygiene.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Language or English.....	*	*	480	300	270	360	360	400	...	...	...	...	...	320	320
{ Oral Lessons on Natural Philosophy, Science, Astronomy, etc.	...	...	80	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
{ Object Lessons.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
{ Science.....	*	...	...	...	...	30	80	80	...	...	...	...	...	80	80
{ Nature Study.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Opt.	Opt.
Geography.....	...	*	120	60	...	60	120	80	...	...	...	...	...	Opt.	Opt.
History.....	*	*	80	40	60	60	120	120	...	...	...	...	...	120	120
Arithmetic.....	...	*	160	180	150	150	200	200	...	...	...	...	...	200	200
Algebra.....	*	*	Opt. 120	*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Plane Geometry.....	...	...	†	*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Bookkeeping.....	*	...	*	*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Electives.....	*	*	*	100	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Drawing.....	*	*	50	40	120	180	80	80	...	...	...	...	...	80	80
Constructive Work.....	...	...	...	...	...	180	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Sewing.....	...	Opt.	Opt.	*	...	†	80	...	...	...	...	...	...	80	...
Shopwork c.....	...	...	...	...	120	90	80	80	...	...	...	...	...	80	80
Cooking c.....	...	...	...	...	60	Opt. 90	80	80	...	...	...	...	...	80	80
Music.....	*	*	90	60	50	60	60	40	...	...	...	...	...	60	40
Pennmanship.....	*	*	120	120	120	†	...	60	...	...	...	...	...	60	60
Manners and Morals. Ethics.....	...	...	*	*	*	*	*	*	...	...	...	...	...	*	*
Study and Unassigned Time.....	a 1500	1500	60	625	655	475	235	285	b	...	...	...	...	195	165
Totals.....	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	...	...	...	...	...	1500	1500

* Subjects taught but with no time prescribed. † Subjects taught but included in the time of some other subjects. Opt. = Optional—not counted. Subjects bracketed count only as having one period of the time specified. a In 1860 it was provided that 120 minutes per day be devoted to study and preparation. b In 1915 one study period is required each day. c In schools having facilities (1880 and 1900). d Not counted in totals—applies only to one sex. e Not counted in totals. If electives were not chosen the principal distributed the time according to his discretion. f In 1915 such time if electives were not chosen must be devoted to English and geography. Therefore time assigned to electives in 1915 is counted. g No; provided for in main table as given in official circular. Prescribed, however, in footnote.